



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

February 26, 2015

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Present: Sharon Bissonnette, Eileen Botelho, Ann Brockmann, Cris Brodeur, Tarin Byrne, Lori DiPina, Susan Donovan, Cindy Duckworth, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliott Pearis, Deborah Garneau, Jennifer Gladding, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Laura Laviano, Trish Martins, , Pamela O'Brien, Douglas Pierson, Maria Silvestri-Golotto,, Sharon Ursini-Quimby

Absent: Edward Angilly, Jennifer Connolly*, Cherie Cruz, Rosemary Gomes*, JoAnn Nannig, Robin Pacheco*, Mary Pendergast*, Brian Quigg*, and Elizabeth Santana*,

**denotes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

RIDE/RITAP Attendees: David Sienko, Beth Pinto & Jane Slade

Call to Order, Welcome, and Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Sue Donovan. Sue welcomed all members

New Business:

Sue Donovan introduced the guest speakers (Jane Slade of RIDE & Therese Curran from West Bay Educational Collaborative). Following a brief update by David Sienko on the Consent Decree, Jane & Therese presented the Career Development Plan for youth with I/DD.

Announcements:

Sue Donovan announced:

- RIPIN & The Sherlock Center rolling out the FEAT training
- RISEAC Leadership met with Commissioner Gist on 2/13/15 to update her on RISEAC's current projects and progress toward goals; the Commissioner assured the RISEAC members that during the leadership transition she will inform the new Commissioner of RISEAC's purpose and agenda.
- The College Forum is happening on Saturday 3/7/15 @ Providence College
- The National Secondary Training Technical Assistance Center Transition Capacity Building Conference is happening on March 12-13, 2015
- FEAC Membership Drive – Sue described the history of the formation of the group over two years ago when the funding for the PIRC ended and asked RISEAC members to direct any interested parents to Geraldine McPhee of RIPIN

- RISEAC membership Drive – Sue asked current members who are not able to continue next year to notify RISEAC leadership and she also encouraged the membership committee to accept nominations for new members for next year.

Other Announcements:

- Dare to Dream May 20, 2015 @ URI – online registration available at www.ritap.org
- Mailing of the Special Education Family Surveys (and the marketing of them) is underway
- Dept. of Health is holding a Health Equity Summit on May 7, 2015
- Brochures are available at this meeting including PSN brochures, updated flyers for the PSN Parent Support Monthly Meetings, and for the Wrights law Special Education Law and Advocacy Conference March 24, 2015 at Providence Sheraton
- Save the Date of May 8th for Children's Behavioral Health Conference
- DCYF has available a tuition assistance program – Lori DiPina will send information through the list serve

Approval of January 2015 RISEAC Meeting Minutes – motion to approve by Pam O'Brien; seconded by Doug Pierson. All Approved. Minutes Accepted.

Director's Report:

February RISEAC Director's Report

Strategic Plan Design Team seeks feedback on first strategic-plan prototype: Values Statements

RIDE wants to hear from you as RIDE moves forward in the development of Rhode Island's new strategic plan for public education.

Each prototype of the new strategic plan will be developed by the Ambassador Design Team: 26 Rhode Islanders selected by the Council through a rigorous application process. The team members will listen to the Rhode Island public and craft what Rhode Islanders are saying into a plan that will be for, from, and about all Rhode Islanders.

The first prototype was developed through hours of individual and collective review of the survey results you and others submitted and through extensive exploration of the team members' individual perspectives on public education.

Your feedback will provide valuable information to the Ambassador Design Team as they review and revise this first prototype and move on to developing the next prototype.

Please review the prototype posted on this page and share this link with everyone in your networks: www.ride.ri.gov/Plan-Feedback .

A brief summary of the entire design process for the strategic plan is posted on the RIDE website at www.ride.ri.gov/Strategic-Plan .

Graduation rates improve, dropout rates decline

The 2014 graduation rates show a number of trends: an increase in the four-year graduation rate and the five-year graduation rate and a decrease in the dropout rate. These trends hold true over the past year (since 2013) and over the past five years (since 2009). Even more important, these trends hold true for the state as a whole as well as for numerous student groups, including Black students, Hispanic students, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students.

The Class of 2014 was better prepared for success than any previous high-school class. One piece of evidence is that the percentage of recent high-school graduates entering the Community College of Rhode Island and in need of remedial courses this fall was 66 percent – compared with 69 percent in 2013 and 75.5 percent in 2012.

Governor Raimondo announces five Board nominees

Governor Gina M. Raimondo announced her intent to nominate five members to the Board of Education. As the Governor works to expand opportunities for Rhode Island families, these nominees will help build the foundation for success in our schools. Raimondo will submit the names for consideration to the Rhode Island State Senate for confirmation.

Barbara Cottam

Barbara Cottam is Executive Vice President for Citizens Financial Group. She serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for Home & Hospice Care of Rhode Island, Crossroads RI, and La Salle Academy. Cottam also serves on the Providence College President's Council, having recently completed ten years as the Head of the Council. She is a founding member of RI Kids Count, the state's leading child advocacy organization, and served on the board for 10 years, the last three as Chairman. From 1991 to 1994, Cottam was Press Secretary for Governor Bruce Sundlun. Cottam is a graduate of Lincoln School and Providence College.

Jim Karam

Jim Karam is the President and CEO of First Bristol Corporation, a real estate development and management company that builds shopping centers, office buildings, and hotels throughout Southern New England. For 10 years, Jim served as a Trustee of the University of Massachusetts, including 4 years as Chairman. Karam is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts.

Marta V. Martínez

Marta V. Martínez currently serves as Executive Director of Rhode Island Latino Arts, an arts education non-profit that provides cultural programs for K-12 students. Martínez is a former elementary school Spanish teacher, and she was previously chosen by Governor Sundlun to serve as the first ever Chair of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Hispanic Affairs. Martínez is a graduate of Providence College, George Washington University and Georgetown University.

Betsy Shimberg

Betsy Shimberg is the Program Director for K-12 Education at the Howard R. Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University. She also serves on the boards of City Year RI and Generation Citizen. Shimberg was confirmed by the Senate in 2008 to the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, serving in this role until 2013. She graduated from Wellesley College and earned a Master's in Public Policy and Administration from Columbia University.

Rev. Dr. Jeffery Williams

Rev. Dr. Jeffery Williams founded the King's Cathedral in 1999, which now owns five properties. Internationally, Dr. Williams oversees 43 congregations in six nations. Dr. Williams graduated from Brown University in 1981. He also has a Doctorate of Ministry degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a Master's in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

RISSA to present Paul W. Crowley Award to Dr. Tom DiPaola

The Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association eighth annual Paul W. Crowley Award is awarded to Tom DiPaola, Ph.D., Director of the Education Leadership Doctoral Program at Johnson & Wales University. The presentation will take place in the State Room of the Rhode Island State House at 3 p.m. on March 4.

Dr. DiPaola has a long history of being a passionate advocate for public education. He has been a leader in special education, education reform, and best practices through his work at the R.I. Department of Education, the Westerly Public Schools, and Johnson & Wales University.

Scheduled speakers at the presentation are Governor Raimondo, House and Senate legislative leaders, and Rhode Island Department of Education Deputy Commissioner David V. Abbott. The award will be presented by the Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association President Kathleen Sipala, Superintendent of the Narragansett Schools.

School Support System – Spring Openings for Team Members

There are a handful of openings for team members for two School Support Visits this spring, Newport, May 11-14 (3 openings at the elementary level, 1 opening at the middle level) and Pawtucket, June 8-11 (openings at all levels). For more information, please contact Jane Keane @ jane.keane@ride.ri.gov or 222-8998.

OSCAS Special Education Directors Briefing – February 5th

The second OSCAS Special Education Directors Briefing for this year was **Thursday, February 5, 2015** and it was a massive success with well over 70 participants. We had a number of Special Education Administrators and ELL Directors comment on how helpful it was to have a joint meeting. The OSCAS Team will be using the feedback from the event to plan the next steps for continued IDEA and ELL coordination activities. The last Special Education Directors Briefing for this year:

Thursday, April 2, 2015 Topic: TBD

Community of Practice in Autism – Social and Emotional Supports

The next session of the Community of Practice in Autism will be held on **March 10th, 4:00-6:00PM at RI College Student Union Ballroom**. This session will provide examples of *Evidence Based Practices* to teach specific social/emotional and communication skills. This professional development opportunity will include practical recommendations, as well as valuable resources.

Topics and Presenters:

AAC: Speaking the Same Language

Faith Paradis, M.Ed. OTR/L and Deana Dufficy, MS CCC-SLP, will talk about Aided Language Stimulation and will demonstrate its use as an Evidenced Based Practice to increase functional communication for all students with complex communication needs; and, Kristy Scallion, M.Ed., special educator in West Warwick public schools will describe the social and emotional supports she finds effective with her students.

This session will also include the Autism Educator of the Year Award presentation.

RICART to Host Forum: Understanding the Link Between Diagnosis and Special Education Eligibility

Working Together:

A panel where educators, clinicians, and parents come together to strengthen the link between clinical community providers and the special education system. **April 16, 2015, 8 am-12 pm, Rhode Island College Student Union Ballroom.**

Parent Survey - Help Get the Word Out!

The 9th annual Special Education Statewide Parent Survey will be administered from late **March to May 2015**. Advertisements for the annual survey will be in the Sunday Providence Journal, Family Fun insert in the Providence Journal, the Pro Jo website and on RIPTA busses internal digital signs and external signs shortly. Please help us by distributing the fliers provided in this OSCAS Update. Thanks for your effort to increase parent participation. If you have questions, need assistance or additional materials, please contact Beth Pinto at 222-8349 or Elizabeth.Pinto@ride.ri.gov.

Safety without Restraints: Trauma Informed Care Conference

“Safety without Restraints: Trauma Informed Care” to be held **March 9th, at Rhode Island College, from 8:15 to 3:00**. This workshop will provide information on trauma-informed care, including the neurological and psychological effects of trauma and its impact on the brain and behavior. Distinctions between trauma and post-traumatic stress will be identified and newer methods of responding to trauma to promote physical and emotional health and well-being will be presented. The trauma-informed approaches to service delivery support alternatives to physical restraint in a broad range of service settings.

Featured Presenters:

Joan B. Gillece, Ph.D. Director, SAMHSA National Center for Trauma Informed Care

Janice L. LeBel, Ph.D., ABPP, Director of Program Management, Child & Adolescent Services Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.

PARCC Update - Clarification and Guidance on Determining ELA Read Aloud Criteria

PARCC gets underway in March and the RIDE Assessment Office has posted a PowerPoint presentation on the RIDE site that provides guidance on determining whether a student meets the criteria for the ELA/Literacy “Read Aloud” accommodation. You can access this presentation here: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/PARCCAssessment.aspx#23184-accessibility>.

NCSC Alternate Assessment Update

The testing window for the NCSC assessment is **March 30 – May 15, 2015**. Information regarding student and teacher registration, teacher training, and meetings for district staff have been posted to the RIDE web site.

SSIP Update

The OSCAS Team is busy writing up the SSIP for submission to OSEP by April 1, 2015. Thanks to all stakeholders for their input. As soon as it is submitted and publically available, we will let the RISEAC membership know.

Part B Application

OSCAS will be posting the IDEA Part B Application to the RIDE web site early next week for the 60 day public review and comment period. This is the annual application for the state to receive the IDEA Part B formula funds. We will send out an announcement when it is posted and available for public review and comment.

Advisory Time: Patti Hein summarized her communications with Heather Heineke, the RIDE Assessment specialist who is accepting input from RISEAC on the FAQ document for the NCSC Alternative Assessments and Patti also asked the group for input/feedback on a template to be used as a letter to parents to be included by Heather in the test administration manual that she is creating. Patti asked RISEAC members to email her any suggestions by 2/27/15.

Public Comment: None

Motion to adjourn made by Tarin Byrne and seconded by Sharon Bissonnette. . All approved.

Meeting was Adjournment: 8: 00 pm